Designing and teaching blended or completely online courses presents an inherent set of unique challenges for faculty. Between migrating content online, flipping your assessment strategies, integrating new instructional technologies, figuring out how to boost student engagement... it can all become very overwhelming. There are two basic models for utilizing the internet for teaching.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Hybrid Course / Blended Courses</th>
<th>Fully Online Courses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A course in which some content is delivered within a classroom or face-to-face environment and some instruction is delivered using an online technology such as a course management system (CMS/LMS), such as Canvas.</td>
<td>A course in which all instruction is delivered using online technology and there are no required face to face meetings.</td>
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**Designing a Blended Course at The University of Kentucky**

1. Request a meeting with CELT or the Office of eLearning to discuss your course redesign ideas, tour a few blended courses, and coordinate any technical training.

2. When your Canvas course shell becomes available to students one week before the start of the term, email a welcome message that introduces them to the course and to the blended learning experience.

3. Ensure that all videos and other audio materials are closed-captioned and comply with UK’s accessibility policy. Contact Deb Castiglione (deb.castiglione@uky.edu) with any questions.

4. Regardless of how classroom and online activities are scheduled, the class should meet the regular, announced class time during the drop-add period.

5. Include a statement in the syllabus—or in Canvas—providing a clear and compelling rationale for employing a blended course format, such as:
   - Giving students more time to reflect upon and refer to relevant materials when researching, writing, and by responding online compared to interacting in the classroom
   - Helping students acquire important skills by using Canvas and other web-based communication technologies that may prove useful in the workplace and lifelong learning
   - Enabling greater time flexibility, freedom, and convenience—including reduced commuting

6. On the first day of class, give your students a comprehensive overview of all assignments and assessments, as well as a complete calendar with all due dates. You can do this in the Canvas Calendar. You can still develop and post online discussion questions week-by-week.
When designing a blended course:

- Use consistent instructions so students know where to go and what to do.
- Clearly state netiquette expectations for online discussions and email.
- Make sure that students understand the learning objectives of the course.
- Develop a grading scheme that corresponds to the amount of work required or expected; if online discussion takes up 20% of the students' time, it should be worth 20% of the final grade.
- Help students understand how to meet the learning objectives; for example, provide a grading rubric for online discussions.
- Integrate face-to-face and online assignments and activities into a cohesive learning environment.
- Select types of assignments and assessments that are appropriate for the blended learning environment.

What to Include in Your Online Classroom Materials and Procedures:

- **Email Policy (see example language below)**
  Please allow me 24 hours response time to your emails. If I do not respond within 24 hours, please resend the email. **Please note: sometimes emails from me are sent to your junk folder. I would recommend checking there first, before resending an email.**

- **Peer/Group Interaction (see example language below)**
  When working with your peers, please remember to be empathetic and that this space is a safe place for making mistakes. With that being said, also keep in mind that everyone in this course is juggling multiple tasks (e.g., jobs, family, other classes). It is important to be clear on group meeting times and be prompt about attending those set times. Failure to do so will result in group termination and a penalty from your final group project.

- **Online Class Conduct (see example language below)**
  Your messages/words reflect YOU. Think about your audience and the relevance of your message before hitting the ‘submit’ button. Take time to make sure your message is correct in its form and content. You can do this by being concise and descriptive. Remember that the people in this class, including the instructor, are someone like you, they deserve and appreciate respect.

- **Canvas Protocol (LMS) (see example language below)**
  Online education requires excellent time management and self-motivation. As an accelerated web-based class, this means checking the Canvas website daily for messages or assignment information. Budgeting your time carefully for coursework and reading as if you were attending a class on a campus will help you avoid unforeseen delays and procrastination that will affect your overall performance.
• Assignment Submission Expectations (see example language below)

All assignments must be posted to the classroom Canvas shell by 11:59 pm on Sunday of the assigned week (see “Daily Schedule” for details). This includes readings, exams, major and minor writing assignments, oral communication presentation assignments, and assignments, as well as any activities, critiques and class discussion postings.

• Files must be saved as a .pdf, or .doc, or .docx. Any other format will not be accepted and considered as missing unless corrected before the deadline.

Again, please do not email me your assignments. You are responsible for keeping back-up (I recommend several) copies of all your work since electronic texts can be lost. If your assignment is lost in cyberspace, you will be expected you to repost it within the same day.

Side note: It’s always a good idea to inform students on a plan of action when technology may fail. Doing so will help alleviate anxieties with technology and uncertainty if a problem does arise. Below is some sample language to provide students with a plan in case a problem does occur.

Having trouble submitting a file, downloading a PDF, accessing a link, etc.? Canvas support is available for technical support 24 hours a day 7 days a week. When you experience technical difficulties, contact the Customer Service Center before contacting your instructor. Click the “HELP” button in the bottom of the Canvas global navigation, and select your preferred mode of communication: Chat, Phone, or Create a Ticket. After you contact the helpdesk, then inform your instructor (be sure to include the helpdesk ticket number in your email for verification).

Facilitating a Blended Course

1. Answer questions and provide feedback on student assignments in a timely manner.
2. Give students the opportunity to provide course feedback at mid-term, not just at the end of the course.
3. Even if everyone students introduce themselves in first class—which can be difficult in larger classes—ask students to post a substantial self-introduction in Canvas. Respond to each student’s introduction with a warm “welcome to the course” message.
4. To facilitate out-of-class interaction, and cut down on student emails to you, create and moderate a “Questions About the Course” discussion topic. Like email and office hours, let students know when you’ll be checking and not checking this area.
5. Track online participation to draw “wallflowers” into the discussions; encourage laggards with email reminders. You can do this from the course analytics page in Canvas.
6. Inform students of your expected presence in the online discussion, such as whether you’ll respond to each student post (except for introductions, neither helpful nor feasible), a select number of posts, or provide a commentary or summary of all posts over the discussion period.